



## United States Senate Budget Committee

**JEFF SESSIONS | Ranking Member**

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### Sessions on President's Budget: 'Unserious Response to Serious Situation'

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**WASHINGTON—U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Ranking Member of the Senate Budget Committee, delivered an opening statement today at a hearing with OMB Director Jacob Lew to discuss President Obama's budget. That proposal, submitted to Congress yesterday, calls for \$8.7 trillion in new spending and would add \$13 trillion to the debt over the next decade.**

Sessions' remarks, as prepared, follow. You can access the Committee's analysis of the budget [here](#) and a one-page summary [here](#).

"Mr. Lew, thank you joining us at today's hearing.

Yesterday, the President submitted his formal budget to Congress. It is the President's third budget, and the last budget that will cover a full year of his current term in office. It was one of his last chances to put forward a serious proposal to address our growing financial crisis.

Our crushing debt undermines confidence in our economy, weakens our standing in the world, and results in devastating job loss for Americans.

A recent study showed that our debt may already be costing us a million jobs a year.

Nearly every expert that has testified before this committee has sounded the warning call. So too has the IMF, Moody's, our own Federal Reserve—all have cautioned us to turn back from the abyss of runaway spending and debt.

And yet the President submitted a budget yesterday that fails to change course. It was a very unserious response to a very serious situation.

The President's budget would increase spending every single year: doubling the nation's public debt by the end of his term, and tripling it by the end of the decade. It would also impose \$1.6 trillion in new taxes on families and businesses—a further barrier to jobs and growth.

Ersine Bowles, the Democrat Chair of the President's own fiscal commission, didn't mince words. Speaking to the Washington Post, Mr. Bowles said that the budget goes "nowhere near where they will have to go to resolve our fiscal nightmare."

Across the nation, editorials rebuked the President for not rising to the occasion. The Washington Post said "the president punted." The Los Angeles Times said the budget "landed with a thud." USA Today said the budget was "a shame, and economically risky." The Wall Street Journal said it was "transparently cynical." The New York Times said "the budget is most definitely not a blueprint for dealing with the real long-term problems that feed the budget deficit." Investor's Business Daily said the President's plan "will lead inevitably to a weaker economy and perhaps even default."

My goal here is not to excoriate the President. It is, for me, a point of sadness, not satisfaction, that we've seen such a weak response. A historic opportunity was lost.

Like when President Nixon went to China, or when Clinton signed welfare reform, this could have been the President's moment to rally diverse political factions behind a common cause.

I believe the country is ready.

Our nation is confronted with a defining challenge. Our financial future hangs in the balance. But the President has suggested he is waiting for Congress to put forward a serious proposal first. That's not leadership. Did Winston Churchill say he was waiting for Parliament to come up with a plan to win the war?

When a nation is faced with any threat—great or small, financial or military—it is the job of the nation's chief executive to step forward with a clear and decisive plan.

But not only has the President failed to lead, his administration has consistently attacked Republicans when they do step up and put forward bold ideas to reduce spending and address our spiraling debt.

In recent days it seems the White House has been more interested in political spin than an honest conversation about our economic challenges. What the President does not seem to realize is that the fight over our budget is about much more than politics; it's about economic survival.

But while I am deeply disappointed, my confidence in our future has not diminished. If Washington does not change direction, the American people will change the direction of Washington.

Significant spending reductions may not be easy. But they will make us stronger and more prosperous. It's a tough road, but it's the right road—and it's the road that leads us to a better future.”

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